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Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554

JUL 26 1997

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Revision of the Commission's Rules	)	CC Docket No. 94-102
to Ensure Compatibility with	)	RM-8143
Enhanced 911 Emergency Calling Systems	)	

To: The Commission

**COMMENTS OF THE RURAL CELLULAR ASSOCIATION**

The Rural Cellular Association ("RCA"), pursuant to Section 1.415 of the Commission's Rules<sup>1</sup> and in response to the Commission's request for comments in the above-captioned docket,<sup>2</sup> hereby submits these comments on the issues raised therein.

RCA is an association representing the interests of small and rural cellular licensees providing commercial services to subscribers throughout the nation. Its member companies provide cellular service to predominantly rural areas in which, collectively, more than 6 million people reside. RCA is an active participant in this docket, having submitted several sets

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<sup>1</sup>/ 47 C.F.R. § 1.415.

<sup>2</sup>/ "Commission Seeks Additional Comment in Wireless Enhanced 911 Rulemaking Proceeding Regarding Ex Parte Presentations on Certain Technical Issues," Public Notice DA 97-1502 (Jul. 16, 1997).

of comments;<sup>3</sup> RCA representatives also met with Commission staff in ex parte meetings held in April 1996.<sup>4</sup> RCA reiterates its concerns that the technical obstacles facing the industry generally, and rural service providers specifically, must not be overlooked.

**I. BACKGROUND.**

The Commission has established a two-phase schedule for the implementation of wireless E911 service. In Phase I, covered carriers will be required to relay a caller's Automatic Number Identification ("ANI") and the location of the base station or cell site receiving a 911 call to the designated Public Safety Answering Point ("PSAP") if (i) the PSAP has requested the service and made the investment necessary to allow it to receive and utilize the data elements associated with the service, (ii) LEC infrastructure will support the service, and (iii) a cost

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<sup>3</sup>/ See Comments of the Rural Cellular Association in CC Docket No. 94-102, filed January 9, 1995; Reply Comments of the Rural Cellular Association in CC Docket No. 94-102, filed March 17, 1995; Comments of the Rural Cellular Association filed March 4, 1996 (comments on the "Public Safety-Wireless Industry Consensus: Wireless Compatibility Issues"); and Reply Comments of the Rural Cellular Association in CC Docket No. 94-102, filed October 25, 1996. See also Comments of the Rural Cellular Association, in the Matter of Petition for Rulemaking of the Ad Hoc Alliance for Public Access to 911, CC Docket 94-102, filed December 15, 1995.

<sup>4</sup>/ See "Public Notice: Ex Parte Presentations and Post-Reply Comment Period Filings in Non-Restricted Proceedings" (Apr. 15, 1996).

recovery mechanism is in place.<sup>5</sup> In Phase II, carriers will be required to identify the longitude and latitude of a mobile unit making a 911 call within a radius of 125 meters with 67 percent accuracy.<sup>6</sup>

In response to *ex parte* discussions with participants in this docket, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau ("WTB") recently prepared a set of questions that addressed technical issues relating to 911 implementation. RCA's review of the record reveals that there are significant differences of opinion regarding the timing of implementation.

## **II. CERTAIN RESPONSES PRESENT OVERLY-OPTIMISTIC CONCLUSIONS.**

Each of the *ex parte* presentations submitted in response to the questions prepared by the WTB provide a comprehensive analysis of the technical issues associated with wireless 911 implementation. RCA notes that comments of the Personal Communications Industry Association appear to present the most balanced view of current technical standards. RCA notes, however, that certain of the responses presented by the Ad Hoc Alliance for Public Access to 911 ("Ad Hoc Alliance") are, when measured against the needs of rural providers, hazardously optimistic.

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<sup>5</sup>/ In the Matter of Revision of the Commission's Rules to Ensure Compatibility with enhanced 911 Emergency Calling Systems: Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, CC Docket No. 94-102, FCC 96-264, at para. 63 (Jul. 26, 1996) ("Report and Further Notice").

<sup>6</sup>/ Id. at para. 71.

For example, responses submitted by the Ad Hoc Alliance bypass the nuances of wireless 911 implementation in rural areas. The Ad Hoc Alliance states that passing a pseudo MIN to PSAPs for "all 911 callers is a trivial exercise,"<sup>7</sup> an assertion that neglects the fact that universal capability to utilize a temporary local call-back number will require major software change-outs, as well as possible upgrades to hardware. Moreover, the Ad Hoc Alliance states that "[t]here has been no challenge to the Alliance's engineering statements regarding the availability or use of pseudo MINs for this purpose." RCA, however, understands that Nortel is not prepared for roll-out until late 1998. Nor, as the Ad Hoc Alliance represents, can a "wireless switch . . . be programmed to use any code information to route calls."<sup>8</sup> A great degree of variance exists among equipment vendors, and not all switches route calls based on MINs.

The reality of software and hardware capabilities and availability must temper the responses of the Ad Hoc Alliance; the numerous variances in system designs preclude a determination that all aspects of wireless 911 can be implemented without delay.

### **III. CONCLUSION.**

The various *ex parte* responses submitted to the Commission provide a comprehensive analysis of the current availability and

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<sup>7/</sup> "Ex Parte Communication of the Ad Hoc Alliance for Public Access to 911," CC Docket No. 94-102, at 2 (Jul. 11, 1997).

<sup>8/</sup> Id.

capabilities of software and hardware that will be used for wireless 911 implementation. The Commission should take note, however, that responses of parties are overly optimistic, and even inaccurate if applied to rural areas. The Commission in this proceeding has recognized the special needs of rural areas.<sup>9</sup> RCA urges that the Commission, consistent with the record established in this proceeding, continue to consider the unique circumstances of rural carriers as each component of wireless 911 implementation is evaluated, and, accordingly, address each of the responses of the ex parte presentations in a manner that contemplates the needs of rural carriers.

Respectfully submitted,  
RURAL CELLULAR ASSOCIATION

By:

  
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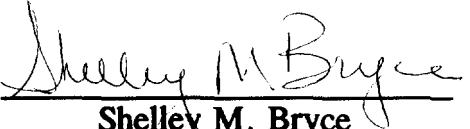
July 28, 1997

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<sup>9</sup>/ See, i.e., Report and Further Notice at para. 84 (providing the availability of waivers for rural carriers of 125-meter Automatic Location Identification (ALI) requirements).

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I, Shelley M. Bryce, hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing "Comments of the Rural Cellular Association" in CC Docket No. 94-102 was served on this 28th day of July 1997, by hand delivery to the following parties.

  
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